

a first inner layer to protect said conductor against water, said first inner layer comprising a crosslinked or uncrosslinked polymer compound containing no halogen; and

an outer layer comprising a blend of a crystalline propylene homopolymer or copolymer, a copolymer of ethylene and at least one  $\alpha$ -olefin optionally with a diene, and an agent having fire retardant properties, the ratio of the thicknesses of the outer layer and the inner layer being from 1 to 7.

54. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein the thickness of said inner layer is from 0.05 to 1 mm.

55. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein the thickness of said outer layer is from 0.25 to 2 mm.

56. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein the polymer of said inner layer is a polyolefin, a copolymer of an olefin with an ethylenically unsaturated ester, a polyester, a polyether, a polyether/polyester copolymer or blends thereof.

57. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 56, wherein said polymer is a polyethylene, a polypropylene, a thermoplastic propylene-ethylene copolymer, an ethylene-propylene or ethylene-propylene-diene rubber, a natural rubber, a butyl rubber, an ethylene/vinyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/ethyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/butyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/ $\alpha$ -olefin copolymer or blends thereof.

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58. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein said outer layer comprises a crystalline propylene homopolymer or copolymer, or a polymer having an enthalpy of melting greater than 75 J/g.

59. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein the homopolymer, copolymer, or polymer has an enthalpy of melting greater than 85 J/g.

60. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein a second copolymer in said outer layer is a copolymer with a narrow molecular weight distribution and having a molecular weight distribution index less than 5 as determined by gel permeation chromatography.

61. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein said  $\alpha$ -olefin is propylene, 1-butene, 1-pentene, 4-methyl-1-pentene, 1-hexene, 1-octene, or 1-dodecene.

62. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein said optional diene is a linear conjugated, or unconjugated diolefin.

63. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 62, wherein the diolefin is 1,3-butadiene, 1,4-hexadiene, 1,6-octadiene, a monocyclic diene, or a polycyclic diene.

64. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 53, wherein said agent having fire retardant properties is magnesium hydroxide, aluminum hydroxide, or a mixture thereof.

65. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 64, wherein said magnesium hydroxide is present in said outer layer in proportions from 10 to 90 wt%.

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66. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 64, wherein said magnesium hydroxide is used with at least one coupling agent to improve interaction between said magnesium hydroxide and said olefin polymer.

67. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 66, wherein said coupling agent is an unsaturated silane, an ethylenically unsaturated epoxide, an ethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic or dicarboxylic acid, or their anhydrides or esters.

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~~68.~~ (New) A method of manufacturing a fire-resistant and water-resistant low-voltage electrical cable comprising covering a conductor with a first inner layer to protect said conductor against water, said first inner layer comprising a crosslinked or uncrosslinked polymer compound containing no halogen; and covering said first inner layer with a second layer comprising a blend of a crystalline propylene homopolymer or copolymer, a second copolymer of ethylene and at least one  $\alpha$ -olefin optionally with a diene, and an agent having fire retardant properties, the ratio of the thicknesses of the outer layer and the inner layer being from 1 to 7.

69. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein the thickness of said inner layer is from 0.05 to 1 mm.

70. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein the thickness of said outer layer is from 0.25 to 2 mm.

71. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein the polymer of said inner layer is a polyolefin, a copolymer of an olefin with an ethylenically unsaturated ester, a polyester, a polyether, a polyether/polyester copolymer, or blends thereof.

72. (New) The method claimed in claim 71, wherein said polymer is a polyethylene, a polypropylene, a thermoplastic propylene-ethylene copolymer, an ethylene-propylene or ethylene-propylene-diene rubber, a natural rubber, a butyl rubber, an ethylene/vinyl acrylate, an ethylene/ethyl acrylate, an ethylene/butyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/ $\alpha$ -olefin copolymer, or blends thereof.

73. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein said outer layer comprises a crystalline propylene homopolymer or copolymer, or a polymer having an enthalpy of melting greater than 75 J/g.

74. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein the homopolymer, copolymer, or polymer has an enthalpy of melting greater than 85 J/g.

75. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein the second copolymer in said outer layer is a copolymer with a narrow molecular weight distribution and having a molecular weight distribution index less than 5 as determined by gel permeation chromatography.

76. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein said  $\alpha$ -olefin is propylene, 1-butene, 1-pentene, 4-methyl-1-pentene, 1-hexene, 1-octene, or 1-dodecene.

77. (New) The method as claimed in claim 75, wherein said optional diene is a linear conjugated or unconjugated diolefin.

78. (New) The method as claimed in claim 77, wherein the diolefin is 1,3-butadiene, 1,4-hexadiene, 1,6-octadiene, a monocyclic diene, or a polycyclic diene.

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79. (New) The method as claimed in claim 68, wherein said agent having fire retardant properties is magnesium hydroxide, aluminum hydroxide, or a mixture thereof.

80. (New) The method as claimed in claim 79, wherein said magnesium hydroxide is present in said outer layer in proportions from 10 to 90 wt%.

81. (New) The method claimed in claim 79, comprising adding at least one coupling agent to the magnesium hydroxide to improve interaction between said magnesium hydroxide and said olefin polymer.

82. (New) The method as claimed in claim 81, wherein said coupling agent is an unsaturated silane, an ethylenically unsaturated epoxide, an ethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic or dicarboxylic acid, or their anhydrides or esters.

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~~83. (New) A method comprising passing electricity through a cable wherein said cable is a fire-resistant and water-resistant low-voltage electrical cable comprising:~~

~~a conductor;~~

~~a first inner layer to protect said conductor against water, said first inner layer comprising a crosslinked or uncrosslinked polymer compound containing no halogen;  
and~~

~~an outer layer comprising a blend of a crystalline propylene homopolymer or copolymer, a copolymer of ethylene and at least one  $\alpha$ -olefin optionally with a diene, and an agent having fire retardant properties, the ratio of the thicknesses of the outer layer and the inner layer being from 1 to 7.~~

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84. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein the thickness of said inner layer is from 0.05 to 1 mm.

85. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein the thickness of said outer layer is from 0.25 to 2 mm.

86. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein the polymer of said inner layer is a polyolefin, a copolymer of an olefin with an ethylenically unsaturated ester, a polyester, a polyether, a polyether/polyester copolymer or blends thereof.

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87. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 86, wherein said polymer is a polyethylene, a polypropylene, a thermoplastic propylene-ethylene copolymer, an ethylene-propylene or ethylene-propylene-diene rubber, a natural rubber, a butyl rubber, an ethylene/vinyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/ethyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/butyl acrylate copolymer, an ethylene/ $\alpha$ -olefin copolymer or blends thereof.

88. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein said outer layer comprises a crystalline propylene homopolymer or copolymer, or a polymer having an enthalpy of melting greater than 75 J/g.

89. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein the homopolymer, copolymer, or polymer has an enthalpy of melting greater than 85 J/g.

90. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein a second copolymer in said outer layer is a copolymer with a narrow molecular weight distribution and having a molecular weight distribution index less than 5 as determined by gel permeation chromatography.

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91. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 84, wherein said  $\alpha$ -olefin is propylene, 1-butene, 1-pentene, 4-methyl-1-pentene, 1-hexene, 1-octene, or 1-dodecene.

92. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein said optional diene is a linear conjugated, or unconjugated diolefin.

93. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 92, wherein the diolefin is 1,3-butadiene, 1,4-hexadiene, 1,6-octadiene, a monocyclic diene, or a polycyclic diene.

94. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 83, wherein said agent having fire retardant properties is magnesium hydroxide, aluminum hydroxide, or a mixture thereof.

95. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 94, wherein said magnesium hydroxide is present in said outer layer in proportions from 10 to 90 wt%.

96. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 94, wherein said magnesium hydroxide is used with at least one coupling agent to improve interaction between said magnesium hydroxide and said olefin polymer.

97. (New) The cable as claimed in claim 96, wherein said coupling agent is an unsaturated silane, an ethylenically unsaturated epoxide, an ethylenically unsaturated monocarboxylic or dicarboxylic acid, or their anhydrides or esters.

98. (New) The method of claim 83 wherein said cable is in a wet environment.

99. (New) The method of claim 83 wherein said cable is in a fire safety environment.

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